



*Philadelphia. Earle,
James S. & sons*

Catalogue of
An Exhibition of

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Drawings,

Sketches

1898

and Etchings

By the late

Charles Keene

(of "Punch")



With an Introduction.



James S. Earle & Sons,

816 Chestnut Street,

Philadelphia.

1898.





CHARLES KEENE.

THE artistic and literary relations of England and the United States are now become so intimate that famous British writers or illustrators no longer need any detailed introduction to people of taste in America.

But the late Charles Keene was one of the exceptions. His ever growing fame has been slow in obtaining its just due of recognition here. This is partly because of his innate modesty as man and as artist; but mainly because his work was so intensely British. Dürer was not more thoroughly German in his art, Rembrandt more Dutch, or Velasquez more Spanish—than Keene was English; and where is the artist so likely to find subjects of real value as in his own country, where he “lives and moves and has his being”?

The depicting of ancient classical scenes by David and his school, or of ancient Roman episodes by Alma Tadema are all very well; but really vital art is the product of the artist's own times, his own country and his intimate surroundings.

It is by no means essential that the man whom posterity delights to honor as a great original artist should have been the producer of ambitious and immense paintings—such as those of Rubens. In Paris, where art is really held in reverence, the subject of their latest public canonization was the modest lithographer Raffet, a man who had lived and died poor and obscure, probably having never in his life earned such “big wages” as are paid in New York to a plumber or a bricklayer; but to-day in the garden of the Louvre, Raffet's monument confronts that of Meissonier.

Similarly, during the long years when Charles Keene was producing masterpieces in black and white his very name was hardly known—although, from the first, certain artists throughout Europe had a way of buying and preserving periodicals containing pictures which bore the modest signature “C. K.”

Not many days after his death in 1891, I took occasion to make the following mention of him in a lecture delivered before the Grolier Club on the subject of some famous etchers whom I had known: “Keene was a good etcher, but was pre-eminent as a designer of comic and satirical subjects. For the past thirty years his spirited and thoroughly artistic sketches have appeared almost continuously in the columns of London *Punch*. He had not the dainty and elegant touch of du Maurier nor the severe distinction of style of Sir John Tenniel—but he will be missed more than either of these able men would be. No other hand can ever draw as he has done—the farmer,

the Scotchman, the Irishman, the 'cabby,' the policeman, the waiter, the landlady, the maidservant and the common little boy and girl. In an article published after his death the *Pall Mall Gazette* says: 'Painters and draughtsmen alike place Charles Keene at the head of all the artists who have ever drawn for *Punch*.'"

What has become of the original drawings which masters like Keene have executed for reproduction through wood-engraving up to ten or fifteen years ago? Nearly all of the precious originals which were thus published have been annihilated in the process of reproduction. The artist made his drawing on the wood-block direct and the engraver in cutting this block (more or less faithfully) of necessity destroyed the artist's original design. Thus it happens that very few of the earlier published designs of Keene and his contemporaries remain in existence—and the loss is irreparable. Fortunately for art in the present day, what is vaguely termed "process" work gives us not only a tolerably faithful copy of the artist's drawing, but also allows the drawing itself to remain intact.

But most happily for the memory of Charles Keene it happens that his very original works are still available, and they form the chief portion of the present exhibition. These are the intimate little studies and sketches which he did solely for himself, and which have been piously preserved by his family. When he worked for publication he was bound to subordinate his own artistic convictions to the requirements of his editor—who in turn was tied down to the taste of the "big public"; and no artistic creator is at his best unless when he works solely to please himself. Of these sketches Mr. Joseph Pennell writes in his timely article "The Art of Charles Keene," in the *Century Magazine* of October, 1897: "For his own pleasure he continued to make with his pen little masterpieces which, in their refinement, are worthy to rank with the etchings of Rembrandt and Whistler."

To all who may be interested in the work of this great and too-little-known man I would strongly recommend the perusal of Mr. Pennell's article. I should be tempted to quote largely from it were it not that the October *Century* is available to every one. Mr. Pennell knew what he was saying when he concluded his article in these words: "He was just 'C. K.,' the greatest English artist since Hogarth." This is a strong assertion, but so long ago as April, 1892, Mr. George Somes Layard (himself the biographer of Keene) writes of him in *Scribner's Magazine*: "He was the greatest of all English artists in black and white, and this superlative is used here without hesitation."

F. K. *appet*





CATALOGUE

2. Amenities of War!—at our Eastern manoeuvres.

Captain of Volunteers and sub. (both conscious of a Pocket Pistol, and both together): "Have a drop o' Something Short?!" (*They refresh horizontally, and feel better.*)

3. The Excursion Season.

First Passenger (poetical): "Doesn't the sight o' the cerulean expanse of ocean, bearing on its bosom the white-winged fleets of commerce, fill yer with——"

Second ditto: "Fi—not a bit of it." (*Steamer takes a slight lurch.*) "Quite the contrary!" (*Makes off abruptly.*)

5. "So Selfish!"

Husband (with pride): "My Love, I've been effecting—I've insured my life to-day for Ten Thousand Pou——"

Young Wife: "Just like the Men! Always looking out for Themselves! I think—you might have insured Mine while you were about it!!"

6. A Ready-made Rejoinder.

He: "You made a Fool of me when I married you, ma'am!"

She: "Lor! You always told me you were a Self-made man!"

7. Crushing!

Smith (late): "'Been assh'isht'n Brown, my Dear! Bal'nsh'n' 'sbooksh."

Wife: "Better keep your own Balance, Sir!"

8. "The Reserve Forces."

Militia Officer: "Augh!—a new man. Ah—'ve you been in 'Service before?"

Recruit: "Yes, Sir."

Officer: "Augh—what Regiment?"

Recruit: "Mrs. Wiggins's Coachman, Sir!!"

9. Repletion.

Robert: "Pudding or Cheese, Sir?"

Abstracted Editor: "Owing to pressure of other Matter, 'regret we are unable to find Room for it!"

10. Exacerbation.

She (they had quarrelled, and were exchanging back their love-letters): I suppose I needn't trouble to return all the locks of hair you've sent me!"

(But he'd no "sense of humour!")

11. The Last Resource.

Short-sighted Customer: "Hum!—Then you don't think you've any stronger than these? They're hardly ——" (*He had tried every pair in the shop. Look at the pile on the counter.*)

Short-tempered Optician: "'Pon my word, sir, then I don't see what there is for you but a Dogan' String—(*emphatically*) Dog and String, sir!"

12. "À Propos!"

Sententious Old Bachelor (in course of conversation): As the 'Old Saw' has it, my Dear Madam, 'Man proposes, but——'"

Widow (promptly): "Yes; but that's just what he doesn't do!" (Tableau!)

15. Judging by Appearances.

Old Scotch Wife: "Losh me! There's a man drenkin' oot o' Twa Boattles at ance!"

(*The Old Gentleman was trying his new Binocular, a Christmas Present to his Nephew.*)

18. A Stable Understanding.

(*Curate who has often explained to his Class that Heresy was "an obstinate choice"*): "Now, Boys, what should you say Heresy was?"

Several Boys: "'Obson's choice, Sir!"

19. Culture. 1881.

Mistress: As you've never been in Service, I 'm afraid I can't engage you without a 'Character'."

Young Person: "I have three School-Board Certificates, Ma'am——"

Mistress: "Oh, well—I suppose for Honesty, Cleanliness——"

Young Person: "No, ma'am—for 'Literatoor,' 'Jogg-r'phy,' an' 'Free 'And Drawring!"

20. "Sharp's the Word!"

Wife: "Poor Mama is dreadfully low-spirited this morning, George. Only think—she has just expressed a wish to be Cremated!"

Husband (with alacrity): "'O' b—less my——" (*Throwing down his newspaper.*) "Tell her to put her Things on, Dear! I'll—I'll drive her over at once!!"

25. Non Ben (Lomond) Trovato.

Rory (fresh from the hills): "Hech, mon, ye're loassing' a' yer watter!"

Aungus: "Haud yer tongue, ye feul! Ett's latt oot to stoap the laddies frae ridin' ahint!"

26. Troubled Waters.

Keeper (to two Tourists, who find Canoeing more difficult on the Highland Rivers than on the Thames):
"Hi! Hoy! Hoy! D'ye no ken this is the McChizzlem's Private Watter!?"

27. The Autumn (Matrimonial) Manoeuvres.

28. A model, with a cloak, sword and a large hat, standing.

29. A model with a cloak and large hat, standing.

30. A model seated, his back to the beholder.

31. Female model, in Spanish costume.

32. Female model, in Spanish costume, with a jar.

33. Female model standing, with a jar.

34. Female model standing, and two other studies.

35. As Lord Nelson.

36. The turret stair.

37. A page.

38. A cavalier.

39. Tric-Trac. A drawing of a garden on the back.

40. An easy chair.

41. A man reading at the foot of a flight of stairs.

42. An Ass.

47. Study.

48. Head of a girl.

49. Two studies of sportsmen.

50. Eight studies of an athlete.

51. Landscape with a man fishing.

52. Landscape with a big road.

53. Landscape with a winding road.

54. A doorway.

55. By the sea.

56. Young man, perhaps Corbould, seated in front of a fire.

57. Man sewing.

60. A sewing machine.

61. A corridor.

62. Landscape with a fence and stream.

63. The Beach, Aldboro', Suffolk.

64. Landscape with a big gate. A number of studies on the back.

66. Two studies of a model seated.

67. A young marksman.

68. A young marksman.

71. Two studies of a cow's head.

72. A lemon-seller.

73. Girl seated, with a book in her lap.

74. Mrs. Caudle, and another study.

75. A girl plaiting her hair.

76. Lady in winter costume.

77. Girl's head.

78. Study of a soldier, seen from behind.
82. Boy standing by a chair. Another study on the back.
83. Boy climbing a mast. Three studies of heads on the back.
84. An artist seated.
85. Artist at work.
86. Elderly man seated, and a second study for his head.
88. A lady with a hood, standing. Finished drawing of a man standing, on the back.
89. Man with a flat cap and a muffler.
91. "Very pleasant" and three other studies. Drawn upon old envelope addressed to "C. Keene, Esq."
92. Going to school.
93. Portrait of Alfred Corbould's Son.
94. A page.
95. Outside the Café.
96. The Garden Seat. Other sketches on the back.
98. A Sportsman. Drawing on the back.
99. Two studies of a soldier. Drawing of a cabman on the back
101. Two studies of boys. Drawing on the back.
102. The man at the wheel.
103. Lady seated by an open window.
104. Man with long hair seated, smoking.
105. A schoolboy, and another study of his head.
106. Artist standing by an easel.
107. Lady with a parasol, standing. Drawing of a man leaning on a rail on the back.
109. Lady with hat and scarf, standing.
110. Man seated, reading. Another study on the back.
111. An artist.
112. Man with a gun. Drawing on the back.
114. Man seated.
116. Young man seated, with a paper on his knees.
117. A portrait.
118. Stage villains.
119. Man with a crush hat.
120. John Bright and another drawing.
121. A waiter. See letter and drawing on the back.
122. A little girl.
124. Girl standing.
125. Girl seated.
126. Man sketching. Drawing of a flute-player, on the back.
127. Three studies of a soldier's head.
128. A child, writing.
129. Man seated, reading.
130. Portrait of Charles Keene.
131. Mrs. Caudle.
132. Landscape, with a field of stubble in the foreground. Another drawing on the back.
134. A girl's head.
136. Man seated, with a bowl.
137. The Violinist.
138. Man with head inclining forward.
139. Two studies of a tourist.
140. Study for "The Pink of Fashion."

141. Study for "The blisssed Saints direct me into this Coat, sorr!"
146. Two women with a bag. Other studies on the back.
147. Two studies of a Jew.
149. Waiting. The soldier is a portrait of Charles Keene.
Drawing of a lady seated on the back.
150. A violincellist. A Langham Club sketch.
153. A Lady with a fishing-rod. Sketch on the back.
156. Lady seated at a table. Drawing of a terrace on the back.
158. Portrait of Fritz Schubert.
161. Two studies of an elderly lady, in bonnet and cloak, seated.
162. An elderly lady, with a basket, standing.
163. Three studies of a man holding a beam.
165. Waiting.
166. Study of a cart and horse.
167. A man seated, writing. Another drawing on the back.
171. Bald-headed man, seated, reading.
172. Study of soldiers.
173. Study of a man in knee-breeches, with a basket. Finished drawing of the interior of a room on the back.



WATER COLORS.

174. A lost shoe.
175. A crossing-sweeper.
176. A combat of cavaliers.
177. The White Knight.



ETCHINGS.

179. A Lansquenet. Beraldi No. 2.
180. Woman in the costume of the time of Queen Elizabeth.
Beraldi No. 3.
181. Man seated, in a doublet and little cloak. Beraldi No. 4.
183. 'Longshoreman. Beraldi No. 6.
185. Lady crocheting. Beraldi No. 8.
187. An old man seated in an arm-chair. Beraldi No. 10.
189. Portrait of Mrs. Edwin Edwards, seated, with a book on
her knees. Beraldi No. 12.
190. Cabin at the end of a jetty by the sea. Beraldi No. 13.
193. A Gendarme. Beraldi No. 20.

